



Building Will Showcase Renewables in Britain

Renewable Energy in the Urban Environment (Renue), a charitable organization based in England, is hoping to demonstrate practical uses for alternative technologies that can reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. The group's show piece will be the Renue building, located on the Wandle River in South London.

A rooftop photovoltaic array will provide much of the building's power, while a small biomass boiler will burn waste that will help keep the space warm in the winter months. About half the cost of the building was provided by a National Lottery grant from the Millennium Commission, while the rest came from donations, sponsors and grants from charitable trusts.

The purpose of the new building is to "inspire and educate lay people and professionals, showing what is possible and helping to increase the speed of change towards a sustainable world," said Renue director Gavin Killip. "The ingenuity and technology to create zero (net) CO₂ buildings is with us today but there is a huge job to educate people."

In addition to using renewable energy, the building will also utilize materials and construction methods that will minimize the amount of energy used to produce them, which Renue refers to as "embodied energy." One example of this is the use of a "stressed skin" made of timber, which will be wrapped around a concrete mezzanine. The concrete will use recycled glass as an aggregate. The Renue building is the first of a number of public buildings planned for the area, and follows on the success of a nearby pub and schools that use solar energy.

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